

Minutes of the May 12, 2011 HP/FH Committee Meeting

Attendance

Present: Ellen Kosmer (EK); Claude Tellier (CT); Nancy Gregg (NG), Chair; Flo Stern (FS); Walter Wolnik (WW).

Nate Malloy (NM) (Staff liaison).

Actions:

Called to order at 9:09 am.

Approved minutes of April 7, 2011 meeting.

4-0-1 (FS abstained).

Approved minutes of May 5, 2011 meeting.

5-0. Unanimous.

Adjourned at 11:15 am.

Discussion:

Minutes. Minutes of the last two meetings were reviewed and approved.

Committee charge. NG's draft recommendations were discussed. A preamble is to be added, defining "fair housing", following consensus that aspects beyond just affordable housing should be incorporated, as well as percentage ranges of Area-Wide Median Income qualifying for "workforce", "affordable" and "homeless" housing. An item is to be added about developing and maintaining an online resource guide including publication of materials online and in other media. "Formation" is to be dropped from housing trust charge item. Tracking the "affordable housing inventory" relative to the 10% mandated by 40B is to be added. NM will prepare a draft charge.

Hawthorne. The housing recommendation was refined. Mass and scale of the existing house is to be retained. The barn is to be repurposed as a converted dwelling or, if not feasible, for storage. NM explained that a potential trail easement connecting to the old farm road would run along the southern edge of the property; the committee felt uncomfortable about potential heavy pedestrian traffic so close to the house. The commemorative plaque should be off the home site, in the area to which the wider community will have access. Garden space should be provided to residents on their own property if feasible; otherwise, they should receive preference in the community garden space.

FS had to leave but wanted to express that she was in favor of soccer fields at this time. It was clarified that the committee's Hawthorne discussion could be continued in June.

The land use portion of the ES/CT draft recommendations steered away from having active team-sport recreation on the designated playing fields and emphasized building community where “community” referred to the wider neighborhood and even the entire town (in contrast to the case with Olympia Oaks where a similar reference had been to the residents of the housing that was to be created). An email from NG had dissented from the land use portion of the draft, and put forward the possibility of the committee’s issuing two sets of recommendations on Hawthorne land use. WW thought the site, adjacent to the middle school, was appropriate for the apparently needed new team-sport fields, but thought an engineering study of the consequences of taking down the hill with respect to possible wetland expansion could be warranted, and suggested following a standard mitigation of replacing the maple trees that would be taken down with new trees of combined equivalent DBH (diameter breast height) on the property if appropriate or elsewhere. EK presented an overview document with the wording of Town Meeting’s May 2010 vote for Hawthorne; WW observed that the CPAC financial statements Town Meeting had received this year showed no Open Space but only Affordable Housing and Recreation appropriations for Hawthorne; EK explained that the existing wetlands were considered the open space element of the project. The original project concept presented to CPAC had the entire parcel going to recreation with the old farm buildings to be reused for office space, but this had turned out to be impractical. The “template draft” document which the committee had been given had been a very early LSSE draft. EK wanted to see the current LSSE draft in case there were aspects, like use of fertilizer, the committee might want to comment on.

Wetland discussion wandered into other existing recreation or potential affordable housing locations (Stanley St., Potwine, West St.)

Other. The Atkins village corner visioning charrette is coming up May 14th. The committee will discuss affordable housing there at its June meeting.

Tasks:

Hawthorne Recommendations and new Committee Charge, June 9th.

Documents:

Draft new HP/FHC Committee Charge.

March 23 Joint meeting with LSSE meeting notes.

March 23 Joint meeting with LSSE issues raised document.

Template draft for Hawthorne Meadow Recommendations.

Draft HP/FHC Hawthorne Recommendations.

Overview document with wording of May 2010 Town Meeting vote.

Northampton Housing Needs Assessment Executive Summary and Table of Contents.

Wisdom Way Case Study.

Next meetings:

June 9 at 9 am, First Floor Meeting Room.

Submitted By

Walter Wolnik